Document 4b

¡Vamos!

Organise Beyond Borders

FOR THE PEOPLE. FOR PEACE. FOR THE PLANET.

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Draft BWI Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026

ADOPTED BY BWI WORLD CONGRESS IN MADRID, SPAIN

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Preface

We are honoured to present to you, on behalf of the Adhoc Working Group on the Strategic Plan, the Draft Strategic Plan for the Congress period 2023 – 2026. This is a collective and participatory product in the tradition of BWI governance practices.

This new document builds of the 2018 – 2022 Amandla! Strategic Plan and brings back the frameworks and basic tasks of our affiliates and our global federation. We propose to read this Plan together with the various Congress Reports as they reflect the achievements, the specific actions or implementations done, the limitations encountered, and the continuing challenges faced.

From the previous 7 Convergences or priority areas, we have identified 5 strategic areas of work. The big change is the primacy of 'Climate Justice' as we have recently seen in the disasters and risks that hugged the headlines around the world. It is by no means that our worker-centred *raison d'être* is diminished but is rather reinforced as the climate crisis is an existential threat to humanity. As the saying goes, '*there is no Planet B*'.

Our work on building trade unions, fighting for human and workers' rights, ensuring health and safety, and fighting for equal future continues with additional focus areas. While we did not have the widespread consultation process as compared to the 2017 formulation process for the 4th World Congress due to the persisting global pandemic, scores of affiliates and several BWI structures contributed to the various consultations and input-generation measures.

We thank the members of the Adhoc Working Group as well as all those who contributed to making this Strategic Plan truly reflective of the interests of our membership, the working people, and their families and communities.

We look forward to the discussions in Madrid, and when adopted, to its implementation that will be characterised shared goals, global solidarity, effectiveness of strategic choices, resource sharing, and eventual success. *¡Vamos!*

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1. Introduction

Humanity is facing a perfect storm of multiple crises. This BWI Congress year is magnifying the numerous self-made environmental, economic, political, and social challenges that our world has to deal with. One cannot overemphasise that ***2022 is a crossroads year – the year that paraded almost all the existential threats to our planet.***

Around the world, extreme weathers are burning communities and forests and cities are engulfed with epic flooding. The United Nations (UN) worriedly announced that we are ***one step from nuclear annihilation***. Global recession is foreseen as the interconnected economies reel from the impact of wars and the enduring pandemic. **Cost of living crisis** is so prevalent that mini revolts are exploding in both the rich and the poor countries and this is intensified by the **supply chain crisis**. The **economic pains are reinforcing the social blame game** that xenophobia and racism as if it doesn't affect the other human being with different race. At the same time, **global democracy continues to be threatened** by the victories of right-wing politicians and parties as well as recycled autocrats or their children and in many countries achieved with **votes from trade union members**.

In this vortex of crisis, the working people bears the burden. This is the imperative for the trade union movement to act jointly and decisively. This is frame upon which BWI has developed its new Strategic Plan.

This Plan's general perspective is demonstrated in the **Congress theme and logo** as they embody the urgent call for workers to act amidst the various issues threatening the planet, peace, and humankind.

BWI is using the word "**¡Vamos!**" a Spanish term which means "let's go" to indicate the urgency of the Congress' call for action. The overarching theme is to **"Organise Beyond Borders**" to reiterate the principle of internationalism, particularly the need to intensify global trade union building; and underscore the imperative to break barriers that sustain inequality in gender, digitalisation, and work status.

To further identify the various aspects of its strategic actions for the next Congress period, BWI added the message **"For the People. For Peace. For the Planet"** to highlight the holistic role of trade unions the global arena, in societies, and in the world of work.

The five (5) lines of dots in the logo indicate the five (5) regions where BWI is present at and is a regular element of BWI visuals **to stress regional cooperation and coordination**, while the colour scheme represents trade unionism, the climate and environment, forest and wood industries, the women's movement, the building materials and construction sectors and our blue planet.

This document is a result of the BWI tradition of participatory process. An Adhoc Working Group on the Strategic Plan was convened and led the consultation and formulation process. Almost **60 unions submitted their questionnaire-based recommendations** on the priorities, issues, and actions while the International Women Committee and the International Youth Committee inputted on the key elements of this Plan. The Adhoc Working Groups on Future of Work and Labour Clauses also contributed. Finally, around **20 resolutions were integrated to this Strategic Plan** as most of them were similar, if not a better formulation, than the initial submissions in the early phase of formulation-consultations.

Finally, we share here again the bedrock of BWI's existence – its Vision-Mission-Goals – as adopted in the 2017 Durban Congress.

Vision

A world with strong, independent, and democratic trade unions in the building and timber trades, where all workers have equitable access to stable jobs, fair wages and safe and healthy working and living conditions. We want to see an enabling environment for trade unions, where international labour standards are promoted, implemented, and enforced, and where social justice, gender equality and respect for trade union and human rights prevail.

Mission

Our fundamental mission is to defend and advance workers' rights, to improve working and living conditions in our sectors. The BWI, above all, has a rights-based approach. We believe that trade union rights are human rights and are based on equality, solidarity and democracy, and that trade unions are indispensable to good governance. The international labour standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the Decent Work agenda of the ILO is a trade union agenda in our sectors. We demonstrate the positive contribution from organised labour, the "Union effect" in achieving these development objectives and in making workers' rights a priority. Our trade union networks are ready to confront exploitative employment and labour practices and to stand up for the rights of all workers in the building and timber trades.

Goals

To improve working and living conditions in the building and wood sectors and promote sustainable industrial development. Our global union of 12-million members from 360 affiliates in 117 countries commit to:

- **Promote and defend human and trade union rights.** Demonstrate the positive "Union effect" in achieving sustainable development and Decent Work through campaigns, networking, communications, and development projects.
- **Increase trade union strength.** Provide support for constant growth of trade union membership among formal and informal workers and improve trade union capacity to represent workers in sectoral policy, collective bargaining and workplace organising activities.
- **Promote a stable and high level of employment in our sectors.** More direct employment and wider collective bargaining coverage is essential to guarantee trade union and employment rights, living wages for men and women, proper working hours, good standards of health, safety and welfare, and skills development to minimise the health risks for workers and to maximise their employability and quality of work. BWI will combat social dumping caused by heightened competition between companies on wages and working conditions.
- **Influence policy and strengthen the capacity of institutions and tripartite structures in our sectors.** Aim to improve employment and labour practices, and to promote, implement and enforce labour standards through tripartism, social dialogue and sustainable industrial policy development. Provide support for greater trade union participation in the decision-making processes.

2. Our World of Interconnection and Borders

Our current Congress theme emphasises **interconnectedness** though we live in a world of barriers, divides, and borders.

Our planet itself, the climate crisis, and the news cycle keeps reminding us that our life is interrelated in many ways. The **political and economic development in one country affects another, their region, and even the global community**. The war in Ukraine is the most recent reminder that we now exist in a global community. A conflict in Europe has repercussions in the rest of the world not only in commodities and trade but also in social peace.

Earlier on, the COVID-19 global pandemic that was declared in March 2020 underscored that **many challenges in the world cannot be compartmentalised**. Millions of deaths later, the economic divide, the vaccine divide, the gender divide, and the political divide all swirled into a vortex of global injustice.

The pandemic also saw the **continuing assault on democracy**, and it was even used to strengthen autocratic rule in some countries. The toxicity of 'me versus them' thinking and the fake news that altered political landscapes has reached alarming scale. The information revolution (appreciated for its democratising potentials) which was spawned by **internet and the social media platforms created connections and disconnections** – in the end creating a new battleground for truth among the global citizens.

The BWI Strategic Plan constantly outlines the **key contextual challenges (with a problem-posing approach)** that are faced by trade unions, those they represent, and even their families. The situation and issues are complex and numerous thus we mention some **snapshots of the milieu and outlooks**[1] that relate to the working people. While some data are 2 - 4 years old, this **2022's 'Summer of Extremes'** (using the North as reference) showed to us the vicious impact of humanity's collective actions. This ¡Vamos! Edition lays the rationale of the strategy and identifies the key themes and issues that requires focused action or policy changes. It is structured based on the three (3) objects of our strategy – ***the People, Peace, and the Planet***.

On the People

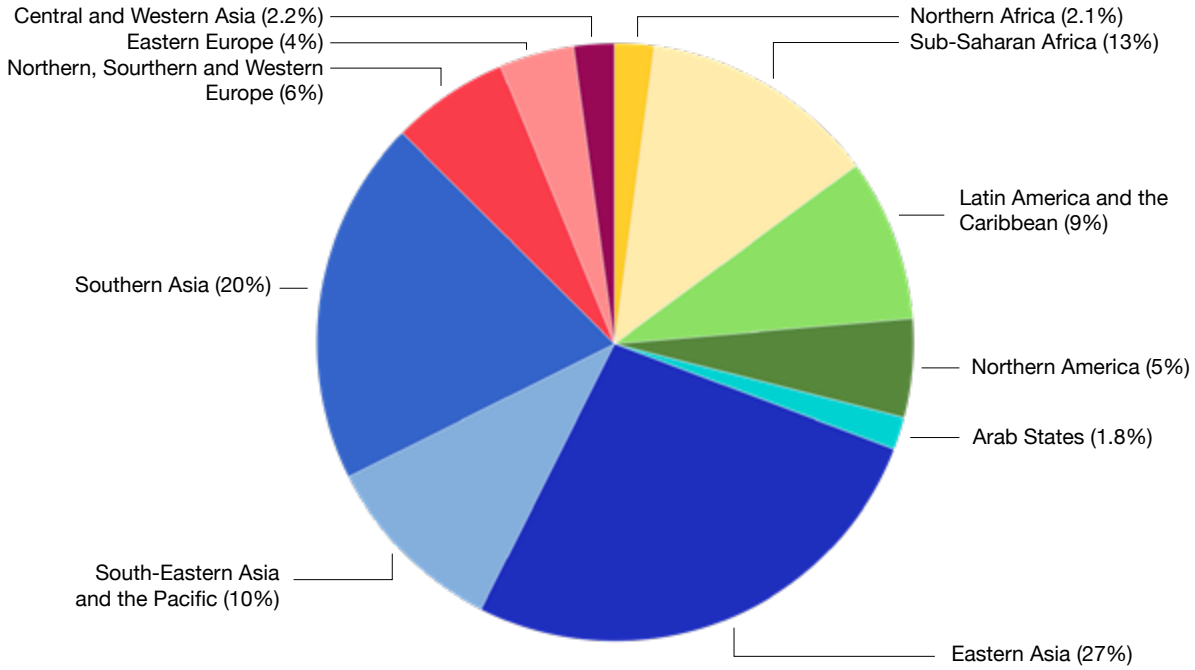
At the time of writing this Plan, the world population is estimated to be **7.97 billion and is expected to reach 8 billion by 15 November 2022**. India recently surpassed China as the most populated country and in its population prospects report for 2022, the United Nations (UN) estimated that 'more than half of the projected increase in global population up to 2050 will be concentrated in just eight countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, and the United Republic of Tanzania'.

Looking at this list of countries from a perspective of trade unionism, we can already **visualize the immensity of decent work deficits that millions of workers are experiencing** now and in the near future. Juxtapose the countries above to the global labour force data (ILO) and Global Trade Union Rights Index (ITUC), we can already glean the key regions or countries where trade union work has to intensify. However, we have to admit that population is not a complete guidepost as the consequences of COVID, economic disruptions, and the various on-going conflicts, notably the Ukraine War, are evolving into a **'Great Equalizer'** – not the desirable one but rather the one resulting out of the cost of living crisis of workers in both the Global North and Global South. In sum, the global labour force – the working class -- is living in **'Planet Inequality'** and this is the first milieu upon which this strategic plan is contextualised.

1 New information shall be added at the post-Congress version to keep the facts and figures up to date.

More than half of the world's labour force is in Asia and the Pacific

Regional shares of the global labour force (in percent), 2022



Last update: 17 January 2022
Source: ILO modelled estimates (Nov. 2021) ILOSTAT

Source: https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/population-and-labour-force/

The global economy produces and provide services, and therefore creates wealth, on the toil of **3.45 billion workers** (World Bank data) **that constitute the world labour force**. These people have mixed working and living conditions, but the picture is becoming bleak on a broader scale.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) global employment trends report, unemployment is projected to be 207 million in 2022 which is approximately 21 million more than in 2019. Relative to 2019 total employment fell by 114 million, before the loss of projected job growth is accounted for. Some **60% of the 3.5 billion employed or approximately 2 billion workers were informally employed** in 2019, demonstrating the extent of precarity and vulnerability in labour markets. There were many instances in which migrant workers were suddenly let go from their jobs without compensation, while at the same time being denied access to social assistance that could have compensated for their income losses.

Despite recovery signs in late 2021 the most recent ILO labour market monitor highlights a reversal of this trend noting that there is a growing risk of further deterioration in hours worked in 2022, as well as a **wider impact on global labour markets in the months to come, due to multiple new and interconnected global crises, including inflation (especially in energy and food prices), financial turbulence, potential debt distress, and global supply chain disruption** – exacerbated by war in Ukraine, observing a 3.8% drop in hours compared to the pre-pandemic bench mark. This represents a loss of a further 112 million jobs nearly the same number as the 2019 to 2021 period underlining the impact of these interconnected crises.

In Africa, for example, the **share of wages and salaried work** dropped from 29.4% to 28.5% between 2019 and 2021. In Latin America this dropped from 61.4% to 60.3% in the same period. South Asia remained constant whilst Southeast Asia dropped by 1.4%.

The past years have **deepened gender inequality where women's employment declined by 5%** while for men this was 3.5%. Globally the labour force participation rate for youth dropped from 41.2% to 38.6% between 2019 and 2020 while for adults this dropped from 65.7% to 63.9%.

In developing country contexts and particular in Africa with a significantly young demographic profile, sees extremely **high levels of youth unemployment and where there is employment this tends to be in precarious work or the informal sector**. Occupational skills development is a significant need for youth; however, it is an era traditionally controlled by employers and the state, making youth interest representation difficult.

Poverty, inequality, and insecurity are also reflected in the externalised costs of production on workers lives and health. The ILO estimates that **some 2.3 million women and men around the world succumb to work-related accidents or diseases every year**. Diseases account for some 86% of these deaths, with the 31% being circulatory diseases highlighting the significant impacts of psychosocial vectors that can be traced to conditions of insecurity and stress. **Risk and hazards are also unequally spread globally**. Accident-related fatalities per 100,000 workers are 8x higher in Africa and 6x higher than Europe and probably much higher still given high levels of underreporting in less developed countries.

Poverty, wars, and climate pressure are enabling a global movement people to uncertainty, precariousness, discrimination, or even to modern slavery. According to the IOM World Migration Report 2020, as of June 2019 the **number of international migrants was estimated to be almost 272 million globally, of which 48 % are women,** and that is 3.5 % of the global population in 2019.

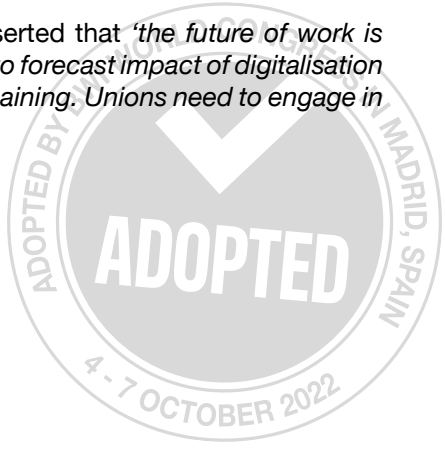
Labour migrants are estimated to be two thirds (2/3) of these millions of people on the move and that translates to **164 million workers**. The horrors of working as a migrant worker is widely known and documented. Modern slavery is the most pervasive description for many of the cases and in many cases criminality and labour employment become 2 sides of one coin of exploitation.

Labour Migration will be the headline of the future, though others may look at this as an old news, it is 'human mobility' that is shaping industrial relations and economic cooperation. Migrant workers make up a significant part of the workforce in construction and forestry and are vulnerable to exploitation because they often have very little access to economic, political, and basic labour rights. They are mostly unorganised without collective power to fight their exploitation and to demand fair value for their work and their fundamental human and trade union rights.

And instances of abuses and rights violations are evident in both high income and developing countries. The avoidable Antwerp school **collapse in Belgium killed 5 foreign construction workers** while in the rich Gulf Region workers are still trafficked, experience contract substitution, receiving low wages, and are dying at work by the thousands. In Serbia, **500 Vietnamese workers were ill-treated** by their Chinese employers and in the US as reported in the American Prospect website, '5,179 workers died on the job in Texas during the decade of the 2010s – more than in any other state. **Two-thirds of those who died on construction sites were Latino**'. The list goes on and on, but these few snapshots accentuate the importance of trade union protection for migrants.

People work with technology and in some cases, **technology replaces people**. The world of work is being reshaped by digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and automation and in many instances the future of work is here now. While the introduction of newer technology impact of speed, efficiency, and costs, it must be done with people, the workers, as a primary consideration.

The perspective is summed-up by the BWI General Secretary when he asserted that *'the future of work is increasingly becoming a bargaining issue and unions need to understand how to forecast impact of digitalisation in workplaces and how to formulate demands and take up these issues in bargaining. Unions need to engage in*



dialogue with social partners to understand the impact of digitalisation on rights and push for the adoption of international standards and national regulations. I think we cannot move to the future of work without workers being involved in defining a just transition that takes into account the social, labour, and environmental impact of change'.

For the PEOPLE, trade unions must break the barriers of gender, age, status of employment, race, and nationality to increase its protective representativity and create sustainable organizations.

On Peace

The concept of peace, as quoted across history, is not only the absence of war. If we read that whole quote, it says 'peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice.' (Spinoza, Theologico-Political Treatise, 1670). This is how the Strategic Plan would like to grapple with the essence of **peace – how it is also attached to democracy and social justice.**

But we are indeed at challenging times. When the UN General Secretary states that, **'we are one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation'**, the situation is already disastrous. While the new cycle focuses on Ukraine, we have to take note as well that according to the Council of Foreign Relations' Global Conflict Tracker, there are 27 live conflicts and instabilities as of 10 August 2022. Millions are displaced, thousands lost their lives, and economies are ruined while human level animosities made big leaps – *just check the 'digital civil wars' raging in social media*.

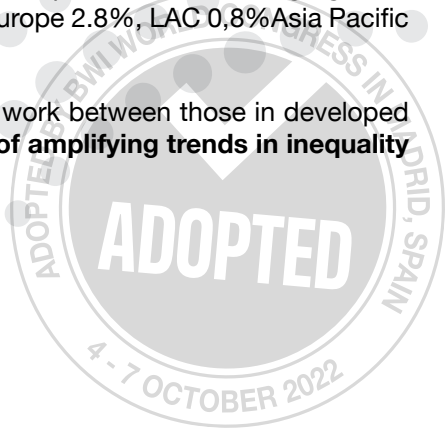
Pushed by geo-politics, historical divisions and claims, geographical encroachments, and even natural resource incomes, these wars are **affecting the global polity and markets** and then creating ripples into our lives.

The prevalence of poverty is one of the ripples of war and at the same time an obstacle to social peace. After a period of improvement in poverty levels globally, be it unequally, we saw that **between 2019 and 2020, the number of people living in extreme poverty increased by an estimated 50 million**. According to World Bank data, in 2021 an estimated **698 million people, or 9% of the global population, are living in extreme poverty** – that is, living on less than $1.90 a day.

Available **data reiterate the unevenness of the recovery** period is highlighted by the fact that the number of people living in extreme poverty outside of sub-Saharan Africa fell from 708 million in 2010 to 240 million in 2021, while the number in countries in sub-Saharan Africa rose from 417 million to 458 million, an increase in the global share of poverty from 37% in 2010 to 66% in 2021. It further shows that **50% of workers in Southern Asia and almost two-thirds of workers in sub-Saharan Africa are living in extreme or moderate working poverty**. This has a general and negative influence on employment practices and conditions in these regions.

The global income picture also shows **inequality and discrimination**. According to the ILO global wage report 2020/1 data is not yet available that fully represents the Covid impact picture, but real wage growth had substantially slowed in the immediate pre-pandemic period. Eastern Europe 2.8%, LAC 0,8%Asia Pacific 1,7% Africa 0.3%.

It is obvious that globally there are significant differences in conditions of work between those in developed and developing economies. The pandemic and wars have had **the effect of amplifying trends in inequality between nations, genders and often even races and ethnic groupings**.



Labour's share of the GDP also continues to decline which and the growing gap between productivity increase and wage increases fuels the inequality gap. This also has a distinctly gendered dimension. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2021 from the World Economic Forum **women earn 37% less than men globally and at the current rate of progress in closing this gap women are 276 years away from closing the gap**.

The cocktail of crises has had massive impacts on poverty, extreme poverty, and job losses particularly in developing countries and particularly for women and youth. The **crisis years of 2020s aggravated structural challenges and inequalities in and between economies and further distorted labour markets** with insecurity and precarity. Many trade unions already deal with sectors characterised by high precarity and the presence of many vulnerable workers.

In this unprecedented scenario the war in the Ukraine and the potential escalation of this conflict has seen a sharp decline in projections of economic growth and an **increase in inflation – with a global average of 7.4% and the developing economies having around 8.7% this year.** The prospects of the double impact of these crises raises the prospect of a period of stagflation (stagnation low growth, and inflation) akin to the decade following the 1970's oil crisis. The shock of the 1970s also marked the turning point for many unions around the world that saw a reverse in growth and the beginning of a decline in institutional and organisational power.

The **implications for the poor and working poor are evident. But this 'summer of extremes' also showed the vulnerability of the working class in rich countries**. Inflationary pressures on buying power, greater unemployment, insecurity, and desperation exercising downward pressure on wages and working conditions, increased health and safety risks and employers turning to more flexible and less regulated employment as a means of reducing risk and transferring costs onto workers.

Poverty is both a global threat and a global reality. The European Union (EU) reported that **96.5 million people in the EU were at risk of poverty or social exclusion** in 2020 and this is 21.9 % of the population. Another data revealed that in 2019, **50 million household live in energy poverty** and experience inadequate levels of essential energy services in EU – way before the Ukraine war which resulted in an energy crisis. And we don't have to dive into the situation of the poorest countries of the world to underscore the suffering of millions of people.

The 2020 data on the world's leading superpower with its massive economy and mightiest army also doesn't look good. For the first time in 5 years the **US poverty rate increased to 11.4% – that is 37.2 million people.** The COVID Year 1 pushed 3.3 million into poverty in a country where 10.8% of the workers are unionized.

As social peace and justice remains elusive in many places, the BWI Build Better Future Declaration (2020) gives us some directions on our task: *'If the aftermath of this crisis is to be greater equality and justice and if the rights of workers, including the most vulnerable are to be recognised, the environment for workers to organise into unions needs to become more friendly. That will require action by trade unions and their allies and fundamental political changes. Recovery should not just mean more jobs, but better and safer jobs and building better societies.'*

For PEACE, trade unions as 'schools of democracy' must innovate and widen its role in the society.

On the Planet

Flooded subways in Seoul. Dried up Rhine River and River Po. 40 degrees Celsius for summer in parts of Europe. Deluge in Kentucky. Hailstorms in Mexico. Wildfires in California and Spain. 49 degrees Celsius in India. Long lasting thunderstorms called 'derecho' killed 11 people in Canada and left 1 million people without power. Deadly summer floods in Brazil and South Africa.

The **planet in convulsing and it is sending us a message.** Our only home, our 'pale blue dot' of a home, is in epic decline and humans, inevitably, are going to be the primary victim of this climate emergency. The planet will survive us, so the human community must act on this existential threat. *We should not burn our own beds,* to paraphrase a 1980s song.

And it is imperative for the working class and the trade union movement to make decisive and strategic adjustments to its mission and actions towards the environment. **People, notably the workers, are at the heart of the Net Zero Goal.** Unfortunately, the ugly head of inequality is again on display in the typical fashion as we face the climate crisis. The uneven disaster preparedness among countries reinforces the global economic and social disparities. The **transition to green and clean economy is also full of profit-seeking corporate manoeuvres** that are devoid of social responsibility. At this point, we are even seeing backward steps on fossil fuel usage as many countries contend with the gas and oil battle with Russia.

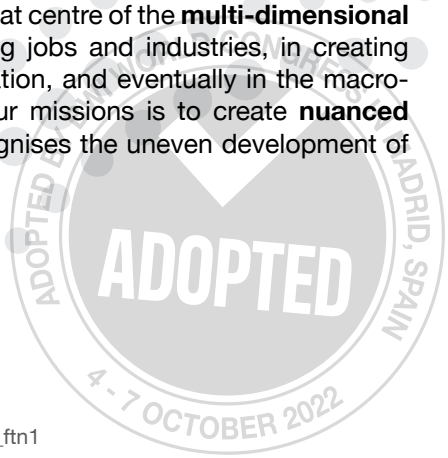
BWI will have to make a quantum leap in its climate justice work. Our sectoral coverage are the major industries in terms of greenhouse gases emissions. BWI constituents are working in the most significant economic sectors that are related to climate change.

Some estimates show that our main sector the building and construction accounts **39%[2] of energy related CO_2** while forestry and land use actually account for **6%[3]**. Though we have to note that forests, if managed responsibly, can play an essential role in the carbon sink while forest-based building materials can extend the carbon storage in buildings up to 70 years – making our sectors assume a dual role **(problems and solutions axis)**.

Construction and building materials workers are involved in the value chains that are categorised as **main industrial emitters**. We build the airports, ports, and highways (transportation 14%), **we build the power plants as well as the dams** and erect the power lines (energy 35%), we construct warehouses and factories, build industrial zones, and install heating-cooling equipment's (Industry 21%), and we build skyscrapers, condominiums and residential houses and **retrofit millions of structures** but at the same time **handling hazardous material** including asbestos in this time and age (Buildings 6%). [Percentages from EPA as extracted from IPCC 2014]

BWI represent the workers that produce the **cement and aggregates** as well as the prefabricated materials to shape projects especially for major infrastructure funded by **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)**. Our wood and forest workers take part in supplying the **wood materials and even the furniture** that make these edifices functional and habitable. BWI forest workers are also clustered in agriculture and land use (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use 24%).

This puts BWI, as the global voice of the workers in these crucial industries, at centre of the **multi-dimensional discourses and arenas** — in policy changes, in protecting or reshaping jobs and industries, in creating re-skilled workforce and informed workers and communities, on urbanisation, and eventually in the macro-industrial ecological imperatives to deal with climate change. One of our missions is to create **nuanced analysis and industry focused agenda-policy proposals** that also recognises the uneven development of the various regions and countries.



2 https://www.worldgbc.org/news-media/WorldGBC-embodied-carbon-report-published#_ftn1
3 https://www.c2es.org/content/international-emissions/

BWI sees the climate change and just transition as integral to the issue of future of work. The transformation of industries, the changes in work process, the use of new technology and materials, the introduction of digitalisation and robotics, the changes in demographics, the demand for new skills and the displacement of others means that the future of work is unfolding. For BWI, this is an **existential continuum** in terms of industrial relations, the big fight for workers' rights, and on the saying "***There are no Jobs in a Dead Planet***".

One of the project papers of BWI sums up the strategic actions needed: *As BWI represent workers internationally - from the brick kilns in South Asia where child labour and feudal employment relations still persists to European construction workers dealing with robots and nano-technology, from forest workers in Africa that toils without decent work for industrialised regional markets to mechanised forest plantations in North America and Western Europe, from the perpetually outsourced cement workers in Latin America and Europe to asbestos endangered workers around the world – **we have to develop urgently an organisational frame of action with proper resources and strategic selection of actions and measures** as green recovery, post-COVID economic models, business as usual for shareholders value, and the continuing threat of climate change dawns upon the global working people.*

For the PLANET, trade unions must become global social actors for climate justice while pushing for science-based but socially responsive policies and actions.

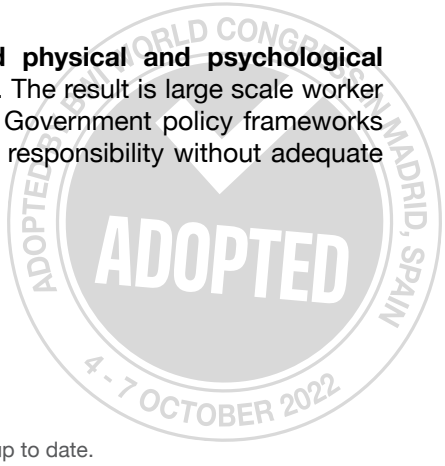
3. Our Organising Arenas

This section profiles our **three (3) main industries** that we are organising as a global family of trade unions. The description of the sectors lays out the nature of the economic branches, describe the labour force, the issues on employment and labour standards, and points out some of the trends in terms of its markets, innovation, and outlook[4].

Fragmented and often highly informalized labour markets are common in numerous country contexts as evidenced by large wage gaps between developed and developing country labour markets. The BWI organized sectors, and in particular the construction and building sub-sectors are further characterised by highly flexible employment systems given the transient and geographically mobile nature of these industries. Sector analysis of employment in these industries sees a **continuing move towards the employment of a smaller core permanent work force and greater numbers of short term contracted workers in ever longer sub-contractor chains** over the past decade. Unions currently largely rely on re-recruiting such workers on a site-by-site basis.

BWI industries are also amongst the more **dangerous industries globally and the flexible nature of employment makes it extremely difficult for workers to claim compensation** for occupational diseases in particular but also injuries in the case of informalized employment. Developing country workers also experience significantly higher proportions of occupational injuries and diseases. Insecurity of various forms including workplace and labour market insecurity is identified as a vector for many stresses related occupational disease vectors, and poverty induced insecurity ensures workers accept and are exposed to greater hazards in the workplace.

This is further aggravated for **women who experience gender based physical and psychological insecurity** and who often make up larger portions of the informal workforce. The result is large scale worker and fundamental human rights abuses in the BWI sectors of organisation. Government policy frameworks even where adequate are plagued by noncompliance, and corporate social responsibility without adequate accountability has not improved these violations.



4 New information shall be added at the post-Congress version to keep the industry profiles up to date.

BWI affiliates are composed of worker organisations committed to **fighting against the worst excesses of the capitalist accumulation regime in developing country contexts** where the externalized costs of profit generation are transferred onto these workers directly in terms of low wages and poor working conditions and indirectly through poor health and often an absence of any social security nets. They do so in the most difficult of organising contexts and where it is **extremely difficult to build sustainable worker organisations that can exert sufficient power** to reverse these impacts in workplaces and at a national and global policy level.

Poor to non-existent social security nets in many developing countries aggravate the insecurity, poor wages and working conditions and inconsistent income experienced by the majority of workers in the BWI organized sectors. These factors also make the collective organisation of workers in these industries significantly more difficult than in more traditional fixed location employment, such as factories, offices, and mines. In turn this makes independent sustainable union organisation more difficult a factor that is further aggravated in developing countries with nominally small labour markets.

Building and construction

Building and construction industry is estimated to employ around **7% of the global work force and accounts for 13% of the GDP** which is expected to increase to 14.7% by 2030. However, the growth over the ten year period will be concentrated in specific countries. Just **4 countries, China, Indonesia, US, and India are projected to account for 58.3% of this growth** (Oxford Economics 2021). The sector is relatively labour-intensive and tends to generate more jobs (direct, indirect, and induced) than other sectors although this is declining over time in all countries.

The **construction industry is supported by a complex supply chain**, both in terms of service delivery and underlying materials and inputs. Companies and people in upstream industries such as mining and forestry, as well as middlemen, might be included (e.g., processing, manufacturing, transportation). There is also a significant downstream business in real estate and commercial property management, as well as other infrastructure services.

The construction industry has a disproportionately high rate of recorded accidents, accounting for **17% of accident related facilities whilst only employing 7% of the globally employed.** COVID-19 has also exacerbated the public health care coverage deficit which already saw almost a billion people spending more than 10% of their income on health care according to WHO and World Bank reports.

According to the ILO, 2022 **temporary employment in the construction industry even before the pandemic, represented 46.3% of all employees globally** (compared to 31,5% for Industry as a whole), this does not include own account workers who make up a substantial component of the construction industry. When lower skilled work is a focus then this figure rises again substantially. There are also higher concentrations of non-standard work forms in developing countries.

For example, the ILO has estimated that informal work as a share of employment in construction is in Zambia 82.5%, Kyrgyzstan 83,7% and India at 97.5%. In Asia **women are proportionately engaged in informal work at slightly higher levels and in Africa slightly lower levels.** Older site level studies going back to 2005 have shown for instance the permanent workforce from samples in Africa countries to be on average around 7% and generally informalisation rates in African countries were lower than for example in Asia.

Global estimates of **women in the construction industry vary between 9-12% of those employed** and when occupations are considered women generally make up around 1% of trades and are also a very small minority in the trades tending to be placed in clerical work. Even in countries with progressive gender frameworks these trends hold. In Sweden, for example, women only account for 10.2% of jobs in the industry. In Asia and South Asia in particular, women do occupy more jobs, but these tend to be in informal activities related to building and construction.

Infrastructure development, urbanisation and population growth in some regions are major drivers of construction activity and employment. **Major infrastructure projects represent the most formal employment patterns**,

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but this employment is predominantly precarious/temporary, and these projects are major drivers of value chain stimulus.

The international contracting market is **dominated by European and Chinese companies.** In the 2021 ranking, the European MNCs occupies 4 of the op 5 slots while their Chinese counterparts have 6 slots in the top 20 for the year 2021[5]. It can be noted that of the 12 European companies in the list, BWI has framework agreements with 7 of them.

In Africa, there is an exceptionally strong presence of **Chinese construction companies in Africa which tend to dominate the large infrastructure projects**. For example, in Nigeria's rail sector, Chinese contractors hold 75% of construction roles, compared with a 35% share of construction roles across Nigeria's wider construction industry. Chinese financing is increasingly commercial as opposed to concessional meaning engagement with Chinese funding institutions will become increasingly important.

The **global market has even evolved as a geo-political competition** as the 147-country Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China is now challenged by the West and Japan through its 600 billion USD Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) launched in June 2022.

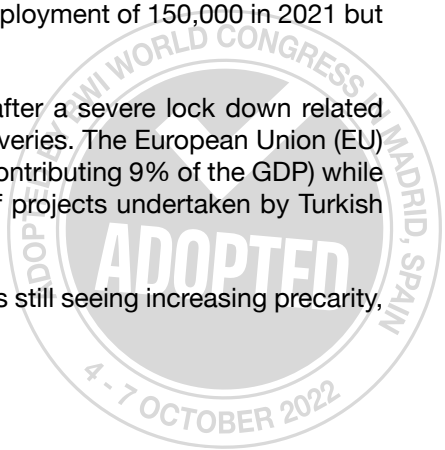
ENR's 2021 Top 250 International Contractors

Rank 2021	Rank 2020	Firm
1	1	ACS Actividades de Construcción y Srvicios SA, Mardrid Spain†
2	2	HOCHTIEF AG, Essen, Germany†
3	3	VINCI, Rueil-Malmaison, France†
4	4	China Communication Construction Group Ltd., Beijing, China†
5	5	Bouygues, Paris, France†
6	6	STRABAG SE, Vienna, Austria†
7	7	Power Construction Corp. of China, Beijing China†
8	9	Skanska AB, Stockhom, Sweden†
9	8	China State Construction Engineering Corp., Ltd., Beijing, China†
10	11	Ferrovial, Madrid Spain†
11	12	China Railway Construction Corp. Ltd., China, Beijing†
12	**	Fluor, Irving, Texas, U.S.A.†
13	13	China Railway Group Ltd., Beijing, China†
14	**	Saipem SpA, San Donato Milanese, Italy†
15	17	Eiffage, Velizy-Villacoublay, France†
16	14	Hyundai Engineering & Construction Co. Ltd., Seoul, South Korea
17	21	Royal BAM Group nv, Bunnik, Netherlands†
18	19	webuild SpA, Milan, Italy†
19	22	China National Chemical Eng'g. Group Corp. Ltd., Beijing, China†
20	18	Tecnicas Reunidas SA, Madrid, Spain†

With construction as a recovery stimulus, there are indeed signs of post-lockdown recovery. Needed **infrastructure investment until 2040 is estimated by G20 at 97 trillion USD**. But there are varied scenarios how it will turn out as headwinds like the continuing conflicts affecting finances and even the price adjustments and availability construction materials. African construction is predicted to grow by 3.7% in coming years with for example 139 major infrastructure projects in East Africa alone. In the LAC region for instance, 2021 saw a growth in employment of 150,000 in 2021 but this is a fraction of the over 1 million jobs lost since 2016.

The **Pan-European region has experienced mixed impacts on growth** after a severe lock down related contraction and again large scale infrastructure projects are leading the recoveries. The European Union (EU) is forecasted to have 2.3% growth this year (with 18-million direct jobs and contributing 9% of the GDP) while in Turkey, despite the economic difficulties in the country, the total worth of projects undertaken by Turkish contractors abroad hit $6.5 billion in the first half of 2021.

The mixed results are still expected this year at the global level, but industry is still seeing increasing precarity, which is a clear signal for union expansion.



5 https://www.enr.com/toplists/2021-Top-250-International-Contractors-Preview

Forestry and the wood value chain

The forestry industry is estimated by FAO to employ **approximately 64 million people** however at least two thirds of this employment is informal, and subsistence based. For this reason, estimates vary widely. This represents between 0,4% and formal employment estimates range between 3 and 18 million.

However even formal employment in forestry is often quite precarious. Many **forest workers do not have formal contract arrangements and suffer from inadequate personal protection** and training; particularly logging operations are often associated with decent work deficits. In addition, women are often involved in a wide range of informal forest-related activities including low-paid or unpaid conditions.

It contributes **1% to the global GDP and this is pegged at $600 billion** though this is underestimated due to massive informality. There are estimates that global demand for timber will quadruple by 2050 hinting major economic potentials and employment for the sector.

Covid-19 has had a largely **negative outcome for sustainable forest management and forest protection efforts** in Africa. Diminishing trade union density, weak trade union structures, anti-union employers, limited organizing possibilities, emasculated bargaining systems and informality of employment are some of the issues that contribute to preventing trade unions as strong and relevant social actors in the Congo Basin (Central Africa) and other sub regions of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Casualisation of labour is rampant in the wood and forestry sector across the globe. For example, GAPWUZ-Zimbabwe reported that workers are being given 3 month contracts when, statutory instrument 113 of 2020, requires an employee to sign a twelve-month contract renewable three times and there after becoming a permanent employee.

Around **17% of the world's tropical forests can be found in Asia Pacific**, 15% in Southeast Asia (SEA) and 2% in South Asia (SA). In the SEA sub-region, the total forest area is about 245 million hectares or 56 percent of the total land area of the 11 countries comprising it. There are significant numbers of migrant workers in the sector in Asia. For instance, there are an estimated 3,500 mills covering 240,000 timber workers in Malaysia. Close to 60 percent of timber workers in the country are foreigners mainly from Bangladesh, Nepal, and Indonesia.

For the wood and forestry sector in Latin America and Caribbean, the rise of international prices maintained the activity levels. Different from the wood industry, the forestry sector is structurally informal, and workers don't have many rights. **Violation of work conditions and even modern slavery are experienced on a daily basis in LAC region**. The rise in international prices hasn't help to improve industrial relations. On the contrary, it deepens the conflicts.

The most notable case was the Brazilian one, where the **national government promoted the destruction of the Amazon Basin**. In 2020, fires, underfunding of control agencies and denialism provoked an international reaction of many countries, to act against the destruction of the biggest rainforest in the world which shelters 10% of the world's biodiversity.

In the **wood industry, the labour relations are better and more stable** as formality is higher. Nevertheless, many conflicts were reported amid the pandemic like in Faber Castell, Staedtler, or Duratex. These conflicts emerged in those countries where the labour framework was weakened, like Peru and Brazil. Certification systems showed to be weak as in terms of promoting decent work or acting on companies, most of them MNCs, that don't comply with basic rights like freedom of association. Trade unions are fighting these MNCs by promoting campaigns for the enforcement of certification standards.

On the positive side we can highlight investments into wood processing in Georgia, where after the adoption of the Forest Code, the construction of business yards in forest services in all 9 regions of Georgia intensively began. It is planned to build 91 sites where wood will be processed and harvested (sawmills, warehouses). In Turkey **exports of furniture, paper and forestry products reached a historical peak of 2.1 billion dollars** in the first 4 months of 2021.

With the approval of FSC International's Board of Directors **labour requirements within the chain of custody standards**, covering the fundamental principles of the ILO Core Conventions, the opportunities for the unions for stronger engagement with around 1,000 companies who are holders of a FSC Chain of Custody Certificate in the many countries are increasing.

Cement and building materials

The sector is **dominated by large multinational companies** such as LafargeHolcim, Heidelberg Cement, Italcementi, Cemex and Votorantim. Three companies from China, 1 from Taiwan, and 1 from Russia complete the top 10 largest producers in 2020. The **global cement market is expected to grow to 340.61 billion USD in 2022** from a market size of 326.81 billion USD from the previous year. While there were **market shakedowns that saw some players sell off their plants and the fluctuating cost of production**, the general projection is that with construction demands still increasing due to recovery packages, urbanization, residential demands, and mega-infrastructure project in the next years, building materials industry would still gain.

In relation to employment and working conditions, **most of these big players in the cement industry have a negative reputation because of anti-union attitude and sub-contracting system**. These multi sub-contracting system have been cheap option for management of many MNCs like Heidelberg Cement, LafargeHolcim, Diamond Cement and Dangote to avoid paying workers the benefit of existing collective bargaining agreement in the building material and construction industry.

In Asia **key labour issues in the cement industry are the massive sub-contracting, outsourcing and non-regularization of workers** employed for many years; health and safety problems; (COVID-19 safeguards); lack of social security coverage and aggressive union-busting. Companies do not replace retiring regular workers and trade union members with permanently employed workers. They instead hire new sub-contracted employees.

The cement and building materials industries in Latin America and Caribbean are facing strong competition. In the case of cement, China, Vietnam, and Turkey are some of the most significant origins of LAC imports. Local industries recognized this context but are taking different strategies to face it. Some of them, like **Argos and Etex, are open to social dialogue to build alliances with trade unions to strengthen their demands on public authorities**. BWI members are improving social dialogue and negotiating agreements to ensure job protection and work condition improvement. On the other hand, Holcim in Brazil doesn't respect social dialogue and takes arbitrary measures fought by the local union. Recently, this MNC put their local business on sale.

In **Pan Europe the performance of the industry is mixed** with some countries registering growth and others not. Turkey was the largest producer of finished cement in Europe in 2020, with production having amounted to 72.3 million metric tons followed by Germany, Italy, Poland, and France. One data show that under the CEMBUREAU industry group covering EU++, there are 46,835 workers in the cement industry.

In sum, the **multiple factors of recovery investments, demand for green building materials, pressure on global supply chains, restart and launch of mega-projects, technological advancement in design and construction, and the rise of smart cities**, among others, will contribute to shaping a high demand building materials industry which can then create more jobs that unions have to protect.

4. ¡Vamos! BWI's 5 Convergence for 2023 to 2026

The formulation of a Strategic Plan is an **exercise of prioritisation**. The international trade union movement covers a multitude of issues and has to act or respond to myriad of themes, issues, problems, trends, and behaviours. Since it has organisational forms at various levels, trade unions act directly within their specific contexts and area of responsibility – and this was framed within the Arenas of Trade Unionism.

BWI Global Union is therefore tasked to cover the most common subjects or issues that are faced by its members and to **identify the strategic choices of actions**[6] to either change or even resolve them.

To achieve ownership of the Strategic Plan and to ensure that it reflects the various realities of the affiliates, BWI organised a **participatory formulation process** – *though different from the previous one due to the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic* – and it resulted to the identification of **5 Convergences or priority areas of actions** with the corresponding **Top 10 Actions** for the next Congress period.

It must be noted at the outset that **Global, Regional, Industry, and Network Action Plans** shall be formulated after the Congress to provide specifics to the proposed priority actions and at the same time consider what is relevant to the realities of the regions, countries, and sectors.

1. Fighting for Climate Justice ('Climate Justice')

The climate emergency is an existential threat to our planet. As a top priority for the next Congress period, BWI aims to transform itself into a **global actor and as the voice of the workers** in the industries it represents in the climate crisis and just transition discourses and processes. Our members and the industries we organise are faced with innovations, adjustments, and transitions that if left alone to market forces and based only on ecological considerations can affect the working people negatively. Trade unions are part of the solutions and should be ready to put forward proposals and innovations that place workers' rights and interests at the centre.

1.1 **Institutionalise BWI's organisational and technical capacity** to generate knowledge, formulate policy recommendations, push for technical adjustments at workplaces and in industries through negotiations and lobbying, advise the affiliates and to represent BWI agendas in international arena.

1.2 Analyse the **implications of climate change in BWI Industries**, formulate nuanced policy recommendations relative to our industries with clear gender considerations[7], and promote best practices – especially those union-initiated – for global implementation.

1.3 Create higher level of awareness on **BWI climate change continuum** among key union leaders and functionaries as well as in their general membership through a systematic education-training program.

1.4 Undertake **national and international engagements with employers and governments** as well as other stakeholders that could lead to concrete workers' rights to protection in adjustments in workplaces and in the industries and **negotiate climate crisis subjects and just transition issues** within collective agreements and International Framework Agreements.

1.5 Strategize and develop policy proposals and programmatic union actions around **circular economy**, in the development of new building materials, and on the built environment as a whole.

1.6 Create a union **network for green infrastructure builders** within BWI and facilitate coordination, cross learning, and joint campaigns.

1.7 Continue BWI's active and labour-oriented participation in the **global forest certification systems** like the FSC and PEFC based on its commitment to sustainable forestry and timber management and

6 The actions listed in this draft version are also referenced to the submitted Congress resolutions for easy statutory tracking. Final update on the text shall be made from Congress discussions.

7 Pan-Europe Resolution on Gender and Climate

push for the industrial social partners and the civil society to work towards sound and responsible forest management and pursue a regionalised approach towards this end[8].

1.8 Advocate for climate protection measures designed **to create and safeguard decent jobs** as well as ensuring that it is not marginalising low-income workers.[9]

1.9 Push for **sustainable housing, sustainable mobility, and socially balanced climate protection** measures in global, regional, and national platforms and dialogues.

1.10 **Lobby for global trade rules** that guarantee that energy-intensive industries remain in locations with high climate protection standards.[10]

2. Building Trade Unions ('Inclusive Trade Unions')

BWI's fundamental task of building trade unions and creating **global representativity is anchored on inclusivity**. The limited global coverage of trade unions remains a challenge and the gap in its protective coverage exposes the reach to informal, temporary, sub-contracted, women, young and even migrant workers. "**No one should be left behind**" is the principle that shall be applied in the various levels of union work of BWI, and programmatic approaches shall be developed to ensure that inclusive trade unionism is achieved. Integral in this priority is the formulation and implementation of the **BWI Sustainability Plan 2030** as the resource base of this Strategic Plan with increased membership and affiliation fees as the central goal.

2.1 Operationalise and institutionalise the **Organising Beyond Borders** through the **Global Organising Academy (GOA)** by assisting the affiliates in increasing their **representativity and union protection impact** through strategic organising-recruitment projects and support specially among precarious, temporary, informal, and vulnerable workers.

2.2 Assist the affiliates in **creating or sustaining** collective bargaining spaces for their members and target industries/trades including the expansion of the Valuing Women's Work campaign to more countries as guide for gender fair bargaining.

2.3 Conduct recruitment, integration and mainstreaming activities for women workers and members at global, regional, and national levels and operationalise the "**Join the Circle**" (or **Step In the Union**) Campaign to encourage more women participation in leadership and decision-making roles within BWI and union structures.[11]

2.4 Participate in actions around **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex (LGBTI) rights** through networking and promotional initiatives.[12]

2.5 Conduct recruitment, integration and mainstreaming activities for young workers and members at global, regional, and national levels and operationalise the "**Get Ready for the Future**" Campaign to encourage more youth participation in leadership and decision-making roles within BWI and union structures.[13]

2.6 Institutionalise a **youth focused union skills training and a successor generation program** based on a two-pillar strategy of targeting young leaders and activists (Regional Activist Network Academy [RANA]) as well as young newcomers in the unions (Track 3 of Global Organising Academy [GOA]).

2.7 Push for national or industry labour law **mechanisms of formality, regularisation, and protection for workers** in BWI industries to enhance organising possibilities for trade unions.[14]

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8 Pan-Europe Resolution on Forest and Biodiversity
9 Pan-Europe Resolution of Protecting the Climate
10 Pan-Europe Resolution of Protecting the Climate
11 Africa-MENA and Asia Resolution of Women Integration
12 Pan-Europe Resolution on Rainbow Workplaces
13 Africa-MENA Resolution of Women Integration
14 Youth Resolution on Get Ready for the Future

2.8 Formulate a **global migrant organising framework and networking** to add BWI focus on and organise-recruit **migrant workers into trade unions** especially in other labour migration corridors and facilitate their full exercise of their social, political, economic, and cultural rights.[15]

2.9 Advocate for enhanced collaboration and cooperation and increased engagement with governments, the private sector and civil society to find **responses to the challenges and opportunities presented by international migration**, to adopt a coherent approach, global and coordinated that is cognizant of rights and trade union roles.[16]

2.10 Develop action plans that will build **international solidarity against right wing ideas** and politics, racism, and xenophobia as well as versus protectionism and insular tendencies among with the workers' movement.[17]

3. Ensuring Safe and Healthy Workers ('Safe and Healthy Workers')

The COVID-19 pandemic brought **occupational health and safety** in the forefront of the issues in the world of work. It did not only reiterate the deficits in the regulatory and management systems in workplaces but also revealed the many related issues inside and outside the workplaces – and they include mental health. BWI is aiming to sustain its leading work on ensuring workers are safe though stronger trade union participation in the promotion and management of OHS. With the trade union victory at the ILO of having OHS as a fundamental right, there is a **momentum to improve national standards and industry practices**, to strengthen union role, and to create a social partnership around it. And BWI, with its presence in the most dangerous industries, is committed to be both a partner and an activist.

3.1 Campaign for the ratification or practical application and implementation of the **ILO Conventions No. 155 and No. 187** as they are now the basis of OHS as the 5th Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

3.2 Broaden the coverage of training and coordination of OHS advocates though the **OHS Brigadistas** by reaching out to more countries outside the 2021 Pilot Countries to further institutionalise national and workplace union engagement on OHS.

3.3 Operationalise a **multi-platform system of workplace monitoring and reporting** on health and safety by developing digital tools, organising union networks and alliances, and creating social partnership at workplace and industry levels.

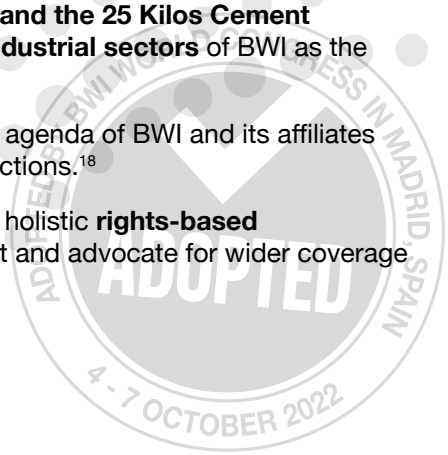
3.4 Create the **Building Collapse Monitor** of BWI and use it to influence Building Codes, Health and Safety Standards and push for monitoring role of trade unions.

3.5 Publish **industry-specific and gender sensitive OHS issues and guidelines** covering building-construction, wood, and forestry as well as building materials—including in the aspects of digitalisation, automation, robotics, new technology and equipment, sustainable building materials, and even on COVID-19.

3.6 Sustain and expand the long-running campaigns on **Ban Asbestos and the 25 Kilos Cement Bags and identify Top 2 health and safety issues in the 3 main industrial sectors** of BWI as the campaign focus in the next Congress period.

3.7 Add **Mental Health** as a strategic focus within the OHS actions and agenda of BWI and its affiliates as well as promote the formulation of regional and national plan of actions.[18]

3.8 Push for the formulation of and participate as a key stakeholder in a holistic **rights-based infrastructure certification system** with OHS as the key entry point and advocate for wider coverage of countries, companies, and projects.



15 Pan-Europe Resolution on International Migration
16 Pan-Europe Resolution on International Migration
17 Pan-Europe Resolution on Strengthening Solidarity
18 Africa-MENA Resolution on Mental Health

3.9 Advocate for the creation a **global labour inspection mechanism** for large infrastructure projects and mega-sporting events with trade unions as a core player.

3.10 Assist the affiliates in advocating for **Natural Disaster Policies** that considers the specific impact on workers and employment while ensuring the solidarity and support in the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.[19]

4. Globalising Workers Rights ('Globalised Rights')

Labour rights deficit is evident in many countries and contexts. It is a global malady for the working people across continents. Economic development or a famous corporate brands do not guarantee the absence of exploitation and other violation of labour standards. As a global union federation, BWI aims to coordinate the various struggles of the affiliates to ensure the respect of workers' rights whether in a national industrial relations context, within a global corporate value chain, in multi-stakeholder infrastructure project, in governmental procurement, in international institutions whether financing development or organising sports events, and even certification systems. Globalising workers' right also means holding into account the human and labour rights obligations of States – especially in countries with democratic deficits, the Industry and the specific companies, and the other Stakeholders in value chains whether in construction, building materials or in timber products as well as in mega-sporting events.

4.1 Campaign for **universal ratification of core ILO Conventions** as well as for ILO Conventions 190.

4.2 Elevate the **Stop Macho Culture Campaign** from a regional campaign in Pan-Europe to a global campaign and create a global network to further develop and coordinate the campaign.[20]

4.3 Increase the signing of **International Framework Agreements (IFAs)** to broaden the covered workers in the global value chains and at the same time increase the effectiveness of IFAs through stronger implementation provisions and introduction of robust problem-solving mechanisms.[21]

4.4 Intensify union organising in **Chinese multinational companies** and in the Belt and Road Initiative as they continue to increase their share of the global construction market. BWI shall assist through strategic organising support, capacity building of involved unions, networking, mapping and exposé, and labour rights and standards advocacy work.[22]

4.5 Harness the **power of workers' capital** by conducting a mapping of BWI related pension funds, hold a strategy conference, and coordination pressure actions against misbehaving companies.

4.6 Promote and coordinate the affiliates' use of **Labour Clauses** in its various forms and settings.[23] The adoption, implementation, and enforcement of labour clauses, as well as affiliates utilisation of these clauses, should be promoted by BWI by in its goal to defend workers wherever possible.

4.7 Deepen and sustain BWI's cooperation with **International Financial Institutions** especially the nascent partnerships with Asian Development Bank and the African Development Bank and create a monitoring mechanism on its impact in worksites and the workers.

4.8 Reformulate and expand the coverage of the **BWI Strategy on Child Labour** noting the union actions around schooling and advocacy in South Asia and the needs and potentials of union measures in other Regions.

4.9 Sustain BWI's role as the leading labour voice within **global forest certification systems** and ensure the respect of workers' right in certified companies by pushing for stricter adoption and enforcement of labour standards and utilisation of their available complaint mechanism.

19 Africa-MENA Resolution on natural Disaster Impact on Workers
20 Pan-Europe Resolution on Stop Macho Culture Campaign
21 Africa-MENA Resolution on MNCs
22 Africa-MENA Resolution on Organising Chinese MNCs
23 Adhoc WG on Labour Clause Submission

4.10 Pursue both the institutional and organisational forms of a **rights-based legacy in FIFA Qatar World Cup 2022** and sustain the sports campaign around 2024 Paris Summer Olympics and launch BWI actions around the FIFA UNITED World Cup 2026 and the Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics 2026.

5. Fair Future of Work ('Equal Future')

Much of the future work is here now and we can glean numerous threats to workers' rights. The struggle for fair future is here and now thus BWI's final priority for the Congress period is ensuring equality the **current and future world work**. Breaking gender, digital, and work status barriers is a precondition for trade unions to increase membership density, to be strong protective organisations, and to be a relevant in creating social and work equality. Preparing unions and workers for **technological changes in the industries** and providing them proper skills is also an important element in this strategic area of work for BWI.

5.1 Convert the Build Better Future actions from a pandemic response into a **Futures Observatory and Strategy** that will be composed of strategic organising, global communications, and of building a BWI knowledge base on the future of work.

5.2 Formulate a **Global Charter** on Digitalisation, Automation and Artificial Intelligence that will guide BWI lobbying and advocacy work in workers' protection around the future of work adjustments.[24]

5.3 Formulate a comprehensive **gender analysis framework** (Labour Gender Lens) with the participation of the various Regions and affiliates to enhance the gender related action plans, to assist gender equal collective bargaining[25], to develop knowledge and understanding of climate change, its impact in the world of work including on BWI sectors and on mitigation strategies[26] and to deepen and broaden both the analytical and normative choices of BWI.

5.4 Develop strategies and monitoring systems to ensure that both men and women have equal access to **employment and to training opportunities** because of the introduction of new technology and automation[27] and push for **Youth focused tripartite policies** and programs that will prepare young workers for digitalisation of workplaces.[28]

5.5 Promote the **Women in Trades** Program – based on robust and fair skills development, certification, and apprenticeship systems – at national level to increase the inclusion of women in the occupational trades of the BWI industries.[29]

5.6 Advocate for wider **social protection for workers** specially pension systems in BWI related industries as global shocks is expected to continue to affect supply chains, employment possibilities, and economic development of countries.[30]

5.7 Ensure that **technological changes in industries** are made based on a participatory or co-determined process that considers role of unions and other mechanisms of workers' inputs and is framed by social protection, employment preservation, skills enhancement, and the facilitation of continuous employment. The shift should also be accompanied by tax reforms or a levy system to fund worker-directed and other social measures.[31]

5.8 Demand from **employers and governments a transition support** on education, training, and qualifications for workers specially for young people and women with the aim on integrating more of them in construction and wood working trades.[32]

24 Adhoc WG Resolution on DAAI - The Future of Work
25 Asia-Pacific Resolution on Empower Women in Trades
26 Pan-Europe Resolution on Gender Equality
27 Pan-Europe Resolution on Gender Equality
28 Africa-MENA Resolution on Youth and Digital Skills
29 Asia-Pacific Resolution on Empower Women in Trades
30 Africa-MENA Resolution on Social Protection (Expanded from WF)
31 Adhoc WG Resolution on DAAI - The Future of Work
32 Adhoc WG Resolution on DAAI - The Future of Work

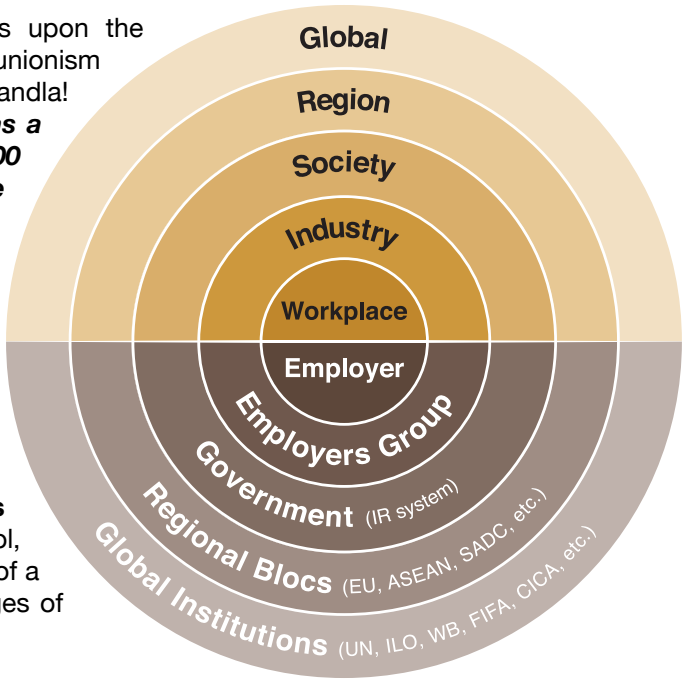
5.9 Promote through the BWI and the C40 Group of Cities Agreement on **Clean Construction** the setting of gender equality targets by the involved city governments.[33]

5.10 Push governments and employers to develop **due diligence mechanisms** in its value chains specially focusing on child labour as well as forced labour and campaign for the universal ratification of ILO Convention 138.

33 Pan-Europe Resolution on Gender Equality

ANNEX: The Frames of BWI Unionism

This ¡Vamos! Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 builds upon the previous one and reaffirms the framework of unionism that were elaborated and used during the Amandla! Strategic Plan 2018 - 2022. It is vital that BWI – ***as a global union with affiliates from more than 100 national industrial relations systems that have various levels of strength and development*** – identifies the basic orientations of how it moves and coordinate to achieve its goals and how it can choose and prioritise its actions as well as where to direct them with desired impact.



Our guideposts for the next Congress period include the Arenas of Trade Unionism, and the Fundamental Tasks of Trade Unions. This menu of actions now also includes a **Labour Gender Lens** as a new frame. However, it is not yet a definitive tool, as its inclusion is to start the participatory process of a defining a robust framework to tackle the challenges of gender equality and mainstreaming.

1. Our Arenas of Trade Unionism

These arenas of trade unionism were identified to **locate our engagements as trade unions**. It also **identifies the social and even political actors** that we should deal with. These arenas, as introduced in the Amandla! version, are reaffirmed here as an integral part of any BWI Strategic Plan.

1. Workplace

This is the **basic unit of engagement** for the trade unions. This can be a work site, a cement plant, a prefabrication area, a plywood factory, a sawmill, a forest cutting area, or a dam site, among others. At this level, the direct employer as well as the main employers (depending on the chain of employment system) are the workers' counterpart. Employment relations is primarily established here, and labour controls and conditions are defined either unilaterally, if there are no unions, or bilaterally, if workers are organised and recognised. Workers deal directly with the employer and ideally uses collective bargaining to share decision making on terms and conditions of employment.

As noted, **workplaces have now become a convergence of various employment systems** thus union organising, and negotiating must be cognizant of this reality. New ways to reach to all types of workers should be utilised and new approaches of representation must a used.

The primordial union work of **organising-recruitment and collective bargaining** happens at this arena. As the base of the workers' movement, this is where members are firstly integrated in the union life. Unions locals or structures at workplaces are the cornerstones of the national and global unions. The key actor here is the BWI Affiliate who undertakes the organising together with their corresponding units like the organising department, the geographical branch, or the sectoral responsible.

2. Industry

This is the second arena where trade union actions happen. Workers have interest to **influence industrial policies** so that employment, economic policies, and potentials are decided or formulated with consideration their agenda and proposals. In many industrial relations systems, collective agreements are signed at this area therefore broadening the coverage of joint regulations of working conditions.

Aside from collective bargaining, social dialogue, lobbying, advocacy, cooperation and partnership and policy inputs through own research and investigations shall be employed.

At this level, **employer' associations and trade groups as well as government bodies are our focus** of engagement. The key player here is the BWI Affiliate functioning as National Union or Federation that represents the workers from the various locals and branches in the BWI industries. Union density and power is an important element for our work to succeed in this arena. Thus, trade union building is still a key action that can be facilitated by broad organising coverage, coordination, and even mergers.

3. Society

Workers, as members of a society and communities, have **stake in politics as labour laws, institutions of industrial relations, social policies and enforcement of labour standards**, recognition of rights, economic programs, administration of social protection institutions are decided upon by the State and its instrumentalities.

The democratic and social values of the trade union movement must be pursued within the realm of politics at it affects the working and living conditions of its members and the broader working class. BWI has categorised trade unions as 'schools for democracy' thus it takes a very crucial social role in creating democratic and equitable societies.

At this level, workers shall engage the State and its instrumentalities. Government-initiated tripartite bodies, consultative councils, labour justice institutions, social protection agencies, labour administration and inspection agencies, economic development, and industrial policy ministries all form part of their societal counterpart.

Negotiations, lobbying, advocacy, and other forms of interest representation are the key actions for BWI unions to undertake. Labour clauses are crucial concern here as its formulation and application covers an extensive area of the building industry.

The union actor in this arena is still the BWI Affiliate (National Union or Federation) and in cooperation with national trade unions or national confederations. In some setting, BWI affiliates form a council or platform to collectively undertake lobbying and advocacy and even negotiations.

4. Region

The globalisation phenomenon has increased international cooperation and underscored the value of shared economic, political, and even social interests. Labour market concerns is central to regional and even sub-regional economic formations/blocs and trade agreements. **Labour standard setting and policies making have occurred beyond borders of a country**. Thus, workers must ensure that their interests and agendas are articulated and integrated in this system of decision-making.

At this level, **workers engage regional blocs** such as the European Union, ASEAN, SAARC, MERCOSUR, SADC, among others as well as trade blocs like NAFTA. Regional development banks like Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), African Development Bank (AfDB), the new institutions such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), among others are also crucial target of engagement as they define (or default) on social and labour protection in their projects, loans, or grants. Labour clauses are central agenda as they are providing protection to workers and giving equal rights.

This arena of trade union work means BWI affiliates have to face **supra-national and inter-governmental bodies**. Lobbying and institutionalised engagements through social-political dialogue constitutes the course of union action at this arena.

BWI regional structures take a lead role in the engagement here and there shall be substantive support from the both the global and regional secretariat in terms of research, policy formulations, and lobbying. **Alliance with other global unions and civil society groups** is also needed in creating a strong front to influence the international institutions.

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5. Global

The global governance infrastructure is based on the need to create cooperation, coordination and partnerships for the community of nations as the challenges to peace, economic development, universal values of democracy and human rights as well as humanitarian support intensifies in this period of wars, protectionism, and decline of multilateralism. **Labour concerns should be protected and pursued in this international arena** as they impact on workers on the ground.

ILO as the main labour standard setting agency – specially as it is tripartite in nature – is becoming an intense court to reduce workers' rights.

Additionally, multinational companies are **global players that have massive impact on labour markets** around the world. There is a need to push them to operate on responsible business conduct and stop their impunity of exploitation. Engaging these economic behemoths means we should have power and representativity in its value chain. This is one of the rationales why global unions exists.

At this level, trade unions engage UN agencies, global financial institutions, international groupings of employers, MNCs, certification systems, thematic processes on urbanisation, forestry, migration as well as global sports bodies.

There are **diverse actions that should be undertaken**. Lobbying, advocacy, exposé, annual meetings, partnerships, submission of policy recommendations through formal mechanisms, institutional membership or participation and even direct negotiations leading to agreements are the means to influence and participate in labour related decisions and programs in this global arena.

BWI as a global union representing hundreds of unions takes the lead role in this arena. It deals with ILO on sectoral matters, dialogue and lobby international-multilateral agencies and processes, signs IFAs, conclude MoUs like the ones with FIFA and Qatar, and even cooperate in training programmes with IFIs.

2. Our Fundamental Tasks

This Strategic Plan reiterate the three (3) strategic pillars of union actions wherein the basic roles and tasks of a trade union – *whether organised a local workplace structure or an international voice of workers* – are structured. The **nexus of strategy and core actions** means that BWI recognises the actions that are regular, routine, and fundamental in the existence of trade unions builds up the strategic areas global work. These tasks are the organisational DNA markers that sets apart trade unions from other interest groups and civil society organisations. The previous Strategic Plan also outlined these undertakings, and it is revisited in this section.

1. **Organising-Trade Union Building,** Trade unions operate on **strength in numbers**. Power can only be developed if it is based on broad and robust representativity. Organising and **recruitment** is a fundamental task of trade unions. This starts in the workplace and extends up to BWI as a global union federation and the common priority that will characterise the work in this congress period is **membership expansion and retention**. Union work is full of risks and the management militancy against workers' organisations is reinforced by the ups and downs of the economy. The decline of membership must be stopped as the net recruitment of many affiliates showed a consistent downward trend – further reinforced by the global COVID pandemic. This strategy also takes into consideration the new forms of employment and the **atypical work** settings that has prevented traditional trade union organising and representation. Sub-contracting, casual work, self-employment, outsourcing, piece rate, migrant workers, posted workers, project contracts and other forms of flexible and precarious work have become more pervasive in our industries.

   Networking and coordination in value chains, in occupational trades, in companies, and even common advocacies is crucial in making strong impact and in achieving goals and agendas. The BWI Global Cement Network, the Global Migration Network, and the BWI Global Wood and Forestry Network are main examples of strong cooperation of unions in creating critical mass of members on a certain industry or company. **Networking even in MNCs without IFAs** will also be undertaken to galvanise solidarity and union power within the corporate value chain. Creation of **thematic and organisational**

platforms as well as facilitating organisational unity or even **mergers among affiliates** shall be pursued further in the next congress cycle. BWI sees this as a contribution to prevent the further atomisation of unions in certain countries and sub-regions and at the same time create more effective and efficient way of achieving union objectives and agenda.

Strategic occupational groups of BWI will be consolidated to increase cooperation, coordination, and united actions. This shall include tower crane operators, electricity and power workers, white collar workers, and those in heavy machinery and infrastructure, specially dam construction workers. Trade union building also means the strengthening of the global federation infrastructure as it guarantees the effectiveness and efficiency of the concerted actions of BWI. Creating new means of mobilising and training members are to be developed. Mass education and awareness building shall be strongly differentiated for the **systematic and rigidly monitored union career pathing** for those receiving skills training. *Our work to create global workers' power based on strong and active national unions under organising and trade union building will be framed as **BUILD!***

2. **Negotiating.** Trade unions are representative organisations whose traditional instrument to define jointly with employers the terms and conditions of employment is **collective bargaining**. The resulting agreement has myriad of contents as shaped by the labour laws and the political-economic context in which unions negotiate. Wages remains to be the central agenda for unions and in some cases dues payment through check off also assist in the sustainability of the union as a bargaining agent. While there are other means to agree with employers – such as Memorandum of Agreements or Understanding - collective agreements are the strongest mechanism to bind the employers to fulfil its obligations to workers under an industrial relations system. Such agreements are signed at project site level, at workplace-plant level, at industry-sector level, and even at national multi-sectoral level.

   Negotiating **International Framework Agreements (IFAs)** is a function of the BWI to provide protective mechanism for the workers of a multinational company. **BWI has signed 22 IFAs** and these are monitored by a joint reference group that conducts inspections, social audits, and conduct problem-solving meetings. The ultimate aim of IFAs is to form trade unions and create protection mechanisms for workers in the whole company chain and this shall include contractors, sub-contractors, subsidiaries, and suppliers. This Strategic Plan targets to scale-up the engagement with companies by monitoring more areas of the corporate network and at the same time conduct more strategic organising to create the widest union coverage in value chain. As a result of the **BWI Sports Campaign**, our global union signed agreements on labour inspections with FIFA for Russia World Cup 2018 and with the Qatari Supreme Committee for the Qatar World Cup 2022. Labour inspections, which are important tools to monitor and enforce labour standards, are being developed further by BWI as a key area of competence. *Bargaining for better working conditions at various levels as governed by international labour standards and principles of democracy, equity, social justice and sustainability, negotiating shall be categorised as **DEFEND!***

3. **Influencing.** Not all issues concerning labour is resolved by bilateral negotiations and engagements with employers. Actors external to workplaces and industries now form part of the **broader industrial relations** in regulating, promoting, monitoring, mediating, and even managing labour concerns. **States** – as both actors and regulators of industrial relations – should be lobbied to reform labour laws, redefine, and enforce labour standards, and respect workers' rights. Negotiations also occur in certain instances, and this gave workers victories in more rights and benefits. Governments also come together in **regional economic blocs** that have developed standards setting regimes on labour matters, albeit in different stages of institutionalisation. The EU, SAARC, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, APEC, and SADC are some examples that we should target for influencing as their policies affect our membership. **Multilateral institutions and processes** for standard setting through ILO and other specialised UN agencies provides a platform for workers and employers to engage governments. Adoption of ILO Conventions and ratification at country levels is a crucial area of work for BWI and its affiliates.

   International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have developed procurement guidelines that pertains to human and labour rights. BWI has strongly lobbied World Bank and regional development banks to come up with comprehensive guidelines for decent work. Our regular dialogue with and participation in consultative bodies of the World Bank has led to a more institutional cooperation. As provider of loans to companies, there is also an opportunity for us to pressure them in keeping their clients in line to respect international labour standards.

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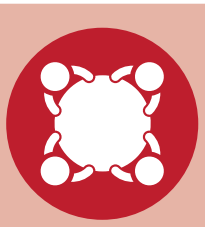
Labour clauses and guidelines are robust and effective instruments that give protection to workers, formalise employment, promote skills development and increase health and safety. They are existing from municipal level to global institutions including ILO and pushing for its enforcement has an encompassing result. The 2016 OECD Guidelines Common Approaches for Export Credit Agencies reinforces the principle of responsible business conduct and the need to relate it to bids evaluation and public procurement. New handles of **rulemaking and application of labour standards** from both state and non-state actors or mechanisms will have to be maximised by BWI in its goal to defend workers wherever as possible. Certification systems also exist to reinforce standard settings within the purview of market access, consumer awareness and stakeholders' commitment to labour rights. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) are the biggest systems where BWI is participating actively and have used their complaint mechanisms in several instances. To succeed in this arena means BWI should sustain and reinforce its **lobbying and advocacy resources** (staff, competence, finances, sharing of responsibilities, and knowledge base) and affiliates must be ready to support through mobilisation, representation, urgent or direct actions, and sharing of competence and resources.

Global policymaking is at the heart of this action. **Communication and campaigning** shall buttress all the 3 strategic actions thus BWI will innovate in sending its messages and broadening its reach by cooperating and harnessing the hundreds of **media outlets of our affiliates**, use the various social media platforms and tools, and establishing itself as a reliable source of information and opinion of mainstream media. We will target the wrongful actions of the top players of the industries under the

Build!

- Organise unions and recruit members
- Continue **pilot organising projects** in BWI engine countries and sub-sectors
- Develop **membership retention** strategies with affiliates
- Organise company and trades-based **networks**
- Assist in strengthening **legal and para-legal capacities** of affiliates
- Use other tools to reinforce union organising like IFAs, **child labour** programme, social security provisions and welfare boards, and migrants advocacy
- Update studies on BWI industries and on focus groups like women and youth
- Create a **knowledge base** on the BWI industries and value chains
- Facilitate greater **ownership and role of affiliates** from MNC home country



Defend!

- Push employers into basic mechanism of **binding agreements** – either through collective agreements or other pathways that retain trade unions as the workers representative
- Conduct **social audit and problem solving** thru IFAs
- Scale up the use **complaint mechanisms** in ILO, OECD, and forest and other commodity-based certification systems
- Sustain **social dialogue** with counterparts in the industry and the governments as well as other stakeholders
- Continue to **negotiate-lobby** the global sports bodies on workers' issues
- Deepen and institutionalise the significance and broaden the actions around **major workers' days** like May Day, 8th of March and 28th of April

Advance!

- Build cases and pressure through **investigations and exposé**
- Conduct **rights-based campaigns** and representation work
- Intensify **urgent actions** on trade union rights violations through public pressure and representation
- Formulate reform agenda and build alliances for **labour law reforms**
- Advocate for strict enforcement of **labour clauses** at all levels
- Lobby and advocate for **labour standards and workers' rights** before Governmental, Inter-Governmental and International Bodies including on Trade Blocs and Agreements
- Use **new and creative campaign** actions at national and international levels

innovative **"Spotlight Project"** to pressure them into responsible business conduct. All these shall be elaborated in the new communication and campaigning **policy and strategy document**. *Our lobbying and advocacy work at national and international arenas as well as our institutional engagements in multilateral processes to put workers' rights as a central factor of policies and programmes, the BWI influencing strategic action will be termed* ***ADVANCE!***

3. Labour's Gender Lens

BWI's gender policies and actions led to many advancements in gender equality within the affiliates and in workplaces. But so much remains to be done. This Strategic Plan makes gender analysis as part of its framework on unionism to ensure that in all the priorities of BWI, the gender dimension is integrated or mainstreamed. And this can be done only if gender inequality is seen within the power relations in the world of work.

Many organisations fall into the trap of women tokenism in its structures, policies and even analysis. This has prevented meaningful changes in the situation of women in trade unions, in workplaces and industries and in the society for many years.

The United Nations Development Program (2016) gives us the basic handles in conducting a gender analysis:

1. Gender analysis is the critical **starting point for gender mainstreaming**: The first step in a mainstreaming strategy is the assessment of how and why gender differences and inequalities are relevant to the subject under discussion. Without it gender mainstreaming is not possible.
2. Gender analysis is a tool that **brings to the surface gender disparities** of a core problem. It reveals the connections between gender relations and the development challenge to be solved, it indicates exactly what that impact is likely to be and promotes alternative courses of action.
3. Gender analysis is a systematic analytical process based on **sex-disaggregated and gender information**. This process is used to identify, understand, and describe gender differences and the relevance of gender roles and power dynamics in a particular context.
4. A gender analysis **helps ensure equitable participation** of women and men in development processes and projects. In some cases, gender issues may be significant to the process/project and play a determining role in outcomes. In other instances, they may be less significant, and constitute rather a set of factors to be weighed with others.
5. It should **show the linkages between inequalities** at different societal levels. Don't forget that neither women nor men form a homogeneous group. Gender relations intersect with many categories of social identities, such as religious, political affiliation, ethnicity, social status, age, and sexual orientation.
6. If we don't **make those linkages explicit**, we run the risk of reinforcing existing imbalances.

These six (6) points provide us already with a **structured and multi-dimensional framework** on how to identify the problems and guide us in finding solutions and at the same time they emphasise the significance of making linkages to approach the inequality question in a holistic manner.

These initial guideposts are by no means complete to formulate a BWI Labour Gender Lens. It is proposed that this Strategic Plan initiate the **process of formulating a BWI gender analytical framework** that will elaborate further its own gender analysis that is cognizant of the particularities and uniqueness of BWI affiliates, industries, and societal milieus.

BWI is the Global Union Federation grouping free and democratic unions with members in the Building, Building Materials, Wood, Forestry and Allied sectors.

BWI brings together around 360 trade unions representing around 12 million members in 117 countries. The Headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland while the Regional Offices are in Panama, Malaysia, and South Africa.

Our mission is to defend and advance workers' rights, and to improve working and living conditions in our sectors. The BWI, above all, has a rights-based approach. We believe that trade union rights are human rights and are based on equality, solidarity and democracy, and that trade unions are indispensable to good governance.

BWI goals include 1) to promote and defend human and trade union rights; 2) to increase trade union strength; 3) to promote a stable and high level of employment in our sectors; and 4) to influence policy and strengthen the capacity of institutions and tripartite structures in our sectors.

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¡Vamos!

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